

11
*SOCIETY FOR IRISH CHURCH MISSIONS TO THE
ROMAN-CATHOLICS.*

S K E T C H

OF THE

ORIGIN AND OPERATIONS

OF

THE SOCIETY FOR

IRISH CHURCH MISSIONS

TO THE ROMAN-CATHOLICS.

BEING A RECORD OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION
TO THE 1ST OF MAY, 1852.

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BY THE

REV. WILLIAM MARRABLE, A.M.,

SECRETARY.

FOURTH EDITION,

“A great door and effectual is opened.”—1 Cor. xvi. 8.

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THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE
AND THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

NOTES

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THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

AND THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

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SOCIETY FOR IRISH CHURCH MISSIONS TO THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

[Instituted as the "Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics," in 1849. First established in the year 1847, as the "Special Fund for the Spiritual Exigencies of Ireland."]

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PREFACE.

THIS Pamphlet, in its first edition, was prepared whilst the writer was pursuing his ministerial duties as Curate of St. Michael's Parish, Dublin, before he became officially connected with the "Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics," in November, 1851.

A reprint of some letters, which appeared in the Dublin *Christian Examiner*, detailing his interesting tour in Conemara in the summer of 1850, having been called for, it was considered better to throw the information they contained into the present form, whilst the stirring events of the last few months rendered it advisable to add fresh matter,—such as increased progress of the Reformation, and independent testimony to the reality of the work by unprejudiced eye-witnesses.

The writer has since been called, in the providence of God, to assume his present responsible charge of Secretary to the Society—a position he hopes he may have strength imparted

to him adequately to fulfil. This will afford him greater opportunities of explaining its operations, which he commends to the prayerful consideration of all who are interested in missionary undertakings.

21, SHEFFIELD TERRACE, KENSINGTON,

May, 1852:

ORIGIN AND OPERATIONS,

ETC. ETC.

THE peculiar circumstances of Ireland at the present moment are drawing the attention of the public in a manner which makes it necessary for Christians of every class to be informed of the dealings of God with her in chastisement and consequent blessing.

That a great and effectual door is opened, in the providence of God, for preaching the Gospel to the Roman-Catholics, is testified by all, though there are many adversaries; but the information is so desultory and imperfect, as to the preparatory movement in the Irish mind, and the advantage taken of it by British Christians, in aid of the clergy of the church established in the land, that it perplexes rather than satisfies the enquirer, though each testimony is, in itself, as far as it goes, valuable.

TESTIMONIES.

The warm advocacy of some of the leading journals of the day is hailed with satisfaction and gratitude on the part of those who take an active interest in the onward movement of the Irish Church, and the following impartial advocacy of the *Times*, in a leading article, dated October 7, 1851, is not without its important bearing on the future interests of Ireland:*

* Other testimonies of equal value, though coming from an opposite and unfriendly source, fully prove the reality of the work, such as the following extracts from Roman-Catholic documents:—

“ *Tuam, March 19, 1851.*

“ The increased activity of the enemies of our holy faith in their efforts to pervert the young under the guise of education, requires redoubled zeal on the side of the pastors and people to frustrate such unhallowed exertions. For this purpose an extensive school, under the monks of St. Francis, has been established in the parish of Annadown. It is to uphold and extend the benefits of this establishment that the bearer is authorized to ask the alms of the faithful.

Signed)

“ † JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.”

"It seems now pretty clear that something like a Reformation is taking place in the province of Connaught. We were unwilling hastily to give credence to the numerous statements which reached us on this subject, because," &c. . . . "Still, however, due allowance having been made for all these things, quite enough remains to convince us that the Irish mind is at this moment undergoing a change of incalculable importance, and shaking off, at any rate in some degree, the fetters of its ancient faith." . . . "In the missions of the Irish Protestant Church, which have achieved such signal success, we recognize a just and fair reprisal for the arrogant aggressions of the Pope. In answer to his bulls, they have published the Scriptures, and, while he is threatening our Crown and hierarchy, they sap the foundations of his power by disseminating the word of God among his people. We trust that those who have undertaken this great work will not lack public sympathy and support."—*The Times*.

To engage the sympathy and support of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and who are anxious for the salvation of perishing souls, the following pages are written: and this, with the earnest hope that the Spirit of the Lord may touch the hearts of many, and kindle within them a fervent desire to be made instrumental in forwarding this missionary work, to the glory of our Covenant Jehovah,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

LATE CONDITION OF IRELAND.

Previous to the year 1846, the Roman-Catholic population of

Extract from the Pastoral of the Romish Bishop of Clonfert, dated 25th July, 1850:—

"It is known to you, brethren, that the most powerful agencies are at work to destroy the faith. At no former time have the declared and covert enemies of our holy religion been more active in their aggressions. The ministers of an heretical establishment are leagued together for the nefarious purpose of debauching Catholics from their allegiance to the Church. In the prosecution of their design they trample alike on the courtesies of society, and on the principles of morality. The highways and places of public resort are polluted with their blasphemous placards; and through the post-office, and by means of hired hawkers, they introduce into the private houses of Catholics, of all classes and conditions, the most disgusting and irreligious publications."

The Romish newspapers continually contain paragraphs full of gross abuse, but which convey incidentally the strong sense entertained of the extent of the work. The following brief extracts are specimens:—

"We learn from unquestionable Catholic authority, that the success of the proselytizers in almost every part of the country, and, we are told, in the metropolis, is beyond all that the worst misgivings could have dreamt of. There is not only no use in denying these statements, but it would be an act of treachery to the best interests of the Catholic Church to conceal them, or even to pass the matter over as a thing of no great moment. But there is no Catholic who does not regard the movement—if he be a sensible and sincere one, and not a brawler and a mountebank—with—we were going to say, dismay—but we shall substitute for the word—indignation and shame."—*Dublin Evening Post*, November 11, 1851.

The *Tablet* of Saturday, the 8th November, 1851, thus bears testimony to the Dublin work:—

"We repeat, that it is not Tuam, nor Cashel, nor Armagh, that are the chief seats of successful proselytism, but this very city in which we live."

Ireland, amounting to nearly* 7,250,000, was, for the most part, sunk in the grossest ignorance, idolatry, and superstition. In the more remote parts it was without a parallel, even in heathen countries. Murder, drunkenness, idleness, Sabbath breaking and excess of every kind was continually committed in the land. Holy wells were surrounded with crowds of votaries, fancying their 'patron saint' would hear them, or cure the diseased and afflicted, who had recourse to them;—the bushes around many of them were covered with rags, as tokens of the cures still unperformed; and not unfrequently was the hair torn off the heads of these people, and knotted on the branches, in their zeal to remind their unknown Gods of the penances performed and the mortifications endured. Often has the blood been seen streaming from the knees of those who had fulfilled the orders of their priests, in the acts of devotion practised round these wells.—Holy wafers, ashes, oil, candles, spittle, beads, crucifixes, and pictures, were in constant devotional use. Charms and scapulars were worn by thousands, to keep them from harm, when blessed by the priest. The people looked on these men as Gods,—they thought salvation was altogether in their hands,—Bibles were burned!—The priests from the altars denounced the zealous and faithful of our Church, and at last, so great was the sin of the land, that the cry of it seemed to reach unto heaven,—“ Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?” (Jer. v. 29—31.) “ Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it.” Ezek. xiv.—13.

This is exactly what God has done!—hundreds and thousands died of the famine—the very weeds of the land and the sea were eagerly sought for, and devoured by old and young! and the truth of this passage of scripture was verified, in the groans of the dying, and their wails for the dead.—Cholera, famine after famine, fever, dysentery, and an extensive system of emigration ensued, so that

* This number is said to include about 5,000,000 who speak English; 2,000,000 both English and Irish; and 250,000 who speak Irish only. The effects of the famine, with its consequent diseases, together with the emigration, and conversions, have since so considerably decreased the number of Romanists in the country, that, with the exception of the inmates of the workhouses (about 500,000), the Protestant population now nearly equals the Roman-Catholic.

the population of towns was decimated,—districts of the country depopulated,—and numbers of the dead lay unburied, the cabin roofs being pulled down over them to hide their loathsomeness, and check the raging of the disease. “Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah !” (Isaiah i., 9.)

TRANSITION STATE.

But “when God’s judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isaiah xxvi., 9.) And now we turn to the point of hope in this most awful crisis in Ireland.—It is written in the xiv. chapter of Ezekiel, (22 and 23 verses,) “Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters ; behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their ways and their doings ; and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it.—And they shall comfort you when ye see their ways and their doings ; and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God.”

There is now a goodly remnant “brought forth,” as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, through the instrumentality of various religious Societies, and especially of the “Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics.” The following letter from the Rev. John O’Callaghan, recorded in the *Banner of the Truth** for September, 1851, (an important penny monthly publication, conveying information concerning the Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics,) shows what Ireland may yet become, when brought under the influence of the gospel of peace, grace, and truth.

The letter is dated from Castelkerke, 31st July, 1851:—

“Nothing can more conclusively prove the reality of the Missionary work at Castelkerke, that it is indeed of God, than that there has been no falling away in the number of the converts for the last year and upwards ; but that, on the contrary, there is now a larger, a more respectable, and a more intelligent congregation than at any former period since the work commenced. It has been indeed a most trying time ; and when I now look back to all the converts have gone through, with everything to depress, and but little to cheer them, I confess I am astonished at the result. It is, then, with humble feeling of deep and heartfelt thankfulness to Him who has been mindful of His own gracious

* Twenty-four Postage Stamps, enclosed to Mr. Shayler, Wonston, Andover-road, Hants, will secure the remission of this most interesting periodical for one year, on the first of every month.

promise, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee, that I now sit down to acquaint you with the present prosperous state of this Mission.

"A few years ago and there were not half a dozen Protestants in this place; but at this moment I am convinced, without the slightest exaggeration, that there is not in the whole of West Galway a country Romish chapel more numerous attended on Sundays, than the place of worship at Castelterke.

"A few years ago the people of this place were sunk in ignorance and superstition—fond of drinking and fighting—but they are now surprisingly intelligent, peaceable, and all, more or less, acquainted with God's word. Of the hundreds of converts in this neighbourhood, there has not been one convicted of any crime for the last three years. So late as Sunday week, some Romanists, who were drinking in a shebeen-house not far from this, quarrelled, and one man was stabbed and badly wounded; and on every court-day there are trials for fighting, stealing, &c., on the part of the Romanists; while there has not been a single case of any quarrelling or fighting among the converts.

"On Sundays the Romanists meet together after Mass to play at cards, to drink whiskey, to curse, and to fight, or may be seen at work as on the other six days; while the converts, after prayers and Sunday School, remain at home with their families, or go to the houses of the Readers to receive instruction: remembering to keep holy the Sabbath day.

"These are facts, which prove the extent and value of the work already done; and which, as proving what Ireland might be, if once rescued from the degrading, pauperising, and mischievous influence of the Romish priests—should stimulate her true friends to exert themselves, more and more, in working out her emancipation by their means, their energies, and their prayers."

The chief means by which this change has been effected in Castelterke and in other places, is by an English Society—"The Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics."—In our temporal distress, England nobly came to our aid, and contributed liberally to stay the cravings of the people. But a holier work was yet to be done—"deliverance to the captives!"—"recovery of sight to the blind!" the enslaved souls of the poor Romanists were to be set free, and released from the "bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God;" and therefore God put it into the hearts of Englishmen to assist the Church established in the land, and aid her ministers (now awakened to a sense of their responsibility), in sending to their Roman-Catholic parishioners, —hitherto supposed to be inaccessible—the message of mercy, pardon, and peace.

PREPARATORY MOVEMENT.*

The minds of Irish Roman-Catholics have been gradually under-

* A very important lecture has lately been delivered by the Rev. Alex. R. C. Dallas, at the Music Hall, Store-street, London, at the request of the "Church of England Young Men's Society, in aid of Missions at home and abroad," ex-

going a change for some years past. The continued agitation on the subject of "the Repeal of the Union," during the life-time of "Daniel O'Connell," especially towards the close of his career in 1841-3, habituated the people to think and reason for themselves on political "liberty." This was considerably aided by a "temperance" movement, under the *apparently* praiseworthy exertions of "Father Matthew," which fitted his superstitious followers to be good rebels in the event of a rebellion, drunkenness having been the cause of the signal defeat of the Irish rebels in '98.

Moreover, the failure of the pretended miracles of the priests, in curing, or arresting the potato disease in 1846, considerably tended to weaken the reliance of the people upon them; the sprinkling of holy water, and salt, on the stalks, in no wise checked the prevalence of the general decay. The feelings of the people were therefore aroused to indignation—they became incensed against these designing men, "who, through covetousness, with feigned words, made merchandise of them." (2 Peter ii. 3.)

To relieve the distress occasioned by the famine, the Government voted £10,000,000 to be expended in remunerative employment;—the priests held a prominent position in the distribution of labour, and payment of the men hired, which gave them the opportunity of withholding, occasionally, money due for the administration of certain rites—the priest himself, or the *Romish* pay-clerk stopping the wages earned by the men.

The tyranny and coercion of these priests very generally disgusted the people; if they did give temporal relief, it was often exacted again as "dues." If a dying relative was to be "*anointed*," the priest would decline to administer the rite, without the payment of money. Hundreds died in this way, unanointed and unshrived, and thus the affections of the people were alienated, and turned towards the Protestant clergy of the land, who were supplied with the means of affording relief through the bounty of the English public. Advantage was taken of this state of things, by some faithful men, to speak to them concerning "the meat that endureth unto everlasting life."

Providential circumstances induced the Rev. Alexander R. C. Dallas, rector of Wonston, Andover-road, Hants, to visit Ireland in 1838-9, and plead the cause of the Jews' Society, in the Rotunda, at the time of the April meetings. He became acquainted with a

plaining very fully all these particulars, and has been printed for general circulation. It is entitled, "The present Position of Popery and Protestantism in Ireland."

number of the clergy, and was requested to address them at their morning meetings, in 1841, when he took the opportunity of impressing on his brethren the importance of attending to the spiritual wants of the Romanists in their several parishes. The Rev. Robert J. M'Ghee, that faithful champion of Protestantism, followed in the same train of reasoning and persuasion; but the clergy were reluctant at that time to give them even a hearing;—they supposed the barriers insurmountable. Mr. Dallas continually visiting and travelling through the country, became intimately acquainted with it, and felt convinced that the time was speedily approaching when missionary effort would be attended with success.

A long residence in Spain and France, and shorter sojourns in Portugal and Belgium, had enabled him to know much of the operations of Romanism on the human mind and heart; and frequent controversies with intelligent Roman-Catholics gave him an insight into the corruptions of that religion, which debases and enslaves the outward and inner man. Moreover, his early military career well suited him for the wide-spread system of organisation which he so efficiently brought to bear in the spiritual warfare he has since carried on against the powers of darkness, “as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” But, above all, his habitual practice of laying before the Lord, in prayer, his minutest plans and arrangements, reveals the secret of all his confidence and success—not acting on any scheme, however apparently well-devised, without patiently waiting until circumstances pointed out the time and mode for action.

In 1845, “upon the very day on which he was arranging some plans in his own mind, the difficulty of which seemed to lie principally in obtaining the pecuniary means for carrying them out,” he received a letter from the late E. Durant, Esq. (of High Canons), asking him “if he was ready to fulfil his long forgotten promise to do something for Ireland,” and stating, that “if he would fulfil his promise *then*, that he (Mr. Durant) was ready to assist him.”

Mr. Dallas, at once, proceeded to London, and communicated his intentions to Mr. Durant. His idea was that the Roman-Catholic mind must be reached in some manner independently of the priests, and proposed, that a few faithful men should be sent forth, with secret instructions, and that tracts should be forwarded through the penny-post (then come into operation), to all whose names and addresses these messengers should be able to procure.

Mr. Durant expressed himself satisfied that this was the best mode of proceeding; something of the same kind had occurred to him. Without further delay, Messrs. Bevan, Gordon, Paul, &c.,

were communicated with, and contributed liberally towards the object. £300 was the amount required for the first experiment, which was advanced in the mean time by Mr. Durant; a sum he afterwards, as occasion demanded, increased to nearly £3,000.

Mr. Dallas visited the chief towns and villages in several counties of Ireland, for the purpose of ascertaining the exact mind of the Romanists with reference to Popery. On his return to England, eight special "messengers" were despatched, for many months, whose duty it was to go, two and two, throughout certain districts assigned to them, and ascertain the feelings of the people on religion generally,—what education their children received (if any), and never to part company from those they conversed with, without conveying the knowledge of the Gospel, and testifying that Christ was the only and all-sufficient Saviour and Mediator.

The peculiar character and constitution of the Irish mind demanded, in the compilation of the tracts, a style both graphic and simple. Advantage was taken of the German reformation, under Ronge and Czerski, to instil principles of suspicion and doubt concerning the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome; accordingly a tract was composed, and widely circulated, entitled "A voice from Heaven to Ireland, or a Look out of Ireland into Germany." It was printed in English, and Irish, and produced a most extraordinary effect upon the people. *Only Romanists received them*—respectable tradesmen and farmers. No one knew whence they came, or by whom they were sent.*

This well devised and extensive scheme was not the only one of the kind, for, in August and September following, a similar mode of imparting knowledge and diffusing light amongst the benighted Irish, was adopted with still greater success. Upon the second occasion, the people generally seemed to profit by the experience of the past; and great numbers of persons, who were suspected of having received a letter, took every possible care to conceal the fact, lest the priest should denounce them from the altar, and demand that the tracts be burned. Most of the letters upon this occasion came from Edinburgh, though some passed through the office in London. The title of the tract referred to is "Irishmen's Rights." It is written in a homely, cheerful style, in the form of a dialogue, proving that every Irishman has a *right* to read the Bible. Two addresses were also sent to the priests.

Taking advantage of the potato disease, a third letter, enclosing

* 25,000 copies of this Tract were issued on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of January, 1846.

a copy of the "Food of Man," was also forwarded soon afterwards, followed by three important addresses to the priests. The number of tracts thus circulated, amounted in all to 90,000. They are still widely disseminated through the country. These led the people to suspect their priests had an object in keeping from them the word of God, and pointed out to them the great fact, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. iv. 4.)

The "messengers" were to take special notice of the manner in which "the tracts," issued during their mission, had been received; and extracts from their journals have been published in a most interesting work, called "The Point of Hope in Ireland's Present Crisis," by the Rev. Alex. R. C. Dallas.

Through the instrumentality of these agents, the most favourable positions to be occupied hereafter by missionaries, visitors, school-masters, &c., were easily ascertained; and by this means Mr. Dallas was able to make the knowledge they had acquired so much his own, that through the medium of their constant reports, and his own conversation with them, during the progress of their mission, he acquired more real insight into the condition of the Romanists in Ireland, than is usually obtained by Protestants residing altogether in the country. It was with solemn prayers these "messengers" and "tracts" were dispatched, and soon such tokens of success were granted, as to make it necessary to give publicity to the grand movement about to be made by a newly constituted society, which the circumstances of the country called into existence.

"THE SPECIAL FUND."

At the time of the famine, in 1846, the funds of various Societies would have been considerably diminished, had it not been for the timely aid of some Christian friends in England, who took up the cause of the Spiritual exigencies of Ireland, and contributed liberally to their support, "a special fund" having been raised for this particular purpose. Letters from Mr. Dallas, which appeared in the *Morning Herald* of the 24th October, and 11th December, 1846, drew forth the sympathies and support of his English brethren, and a committee of twenty-four was formed, composed chiefly of Englishmen, the Duke of Manchester acting as President; the late Edward Bickersteth, and Mr. Dallas, as Honorary Secretaries; and J. M. Knott, Esq., as Secretary, for the purpose of receiving and disbursing the money. The sum of

£8,504 2s. 6d. was raised in the first year, and £2,078. 7s. in the second, and allocated to such societies as were the most adapted to meet the wants of the people.

“The Special Fund for the spiritual exigencies of Ireland” supplied the various societies, already in operation, with the necessary means of carrying on their labours, without experiencing any serious diminution, at the time of much outward pressure. Its incipient operations began in 1846; it worked through 1847 and 1848, and was instrumental in extending through West Galway the missions hitherto supported chiefly by Mr. Durant,* &c., at Castelkerke, and through the medium of the Irish Society of London, paid the salary of some agents in these parts.

ITS NAME, &C., CHANGED.

The Committee of this fund did not contemplate at that time any extension of their plans, but greater objects soon became the subject of serious consideration. The Irish Society, which had long been at work in certain Irish-speaking districts through the country, in teaching the Irish people to read the Scriptures in their own language, had been requested to undertake a great missionary movement of a higher order than that which they employed; but the Committee of that society, acting, no doubt, on the most conscientious motives, declined to undertake the task, which they considered not to come directly within the object for which they had been founded.

In this crisis, the Committee of the “Special Fund,” impressed with the importance of the occasion, resolved themselves to send out missionaries, and not act merely as a collector for other institutions. From the letters which they received from various parts of Ireland in the course of the year 1847—from personal investigations of Dr. Kalley, of Madeira,—who, at their request, made many inquiries, during several months, in different parts of the south of Ireland,—and from the able and heart-stirring appeals through the press, of their valued friend and fellow-labourer, J. E. Gordon, Esq.,—the Committee, early in the year 1848, were induced to enter upon the plan of maintaining missionaries to labour exclusively amongst the Roman-Catholics, and to organize congregations in connexion with the Church, which no other religious society at this time provided. Accordingly, the name, constitution, and rules of the “Spe-

* This self-denying servant of the Lord was removed by death at the age of eighty, in November, 1848, within two or three days of the time the Committee determined on changing their plans.

cial Fund for the Spiritual Exigencies of Ireland," were changed. This association was afterwards (May 25, 1849,) designated "The Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics." It was determined in September, 1849, to have a Clerical Secretary, and a new arrangement of officials was made. The following object and rules of this society, extracted from the annual report, will give the reader a fair idea of the peculiar position it has assumed:—

OBJECT AND RULES OF THE SOCIETY.

"The great object of the Society is to promote Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics of Ireland through the Established Church in Ireland; the chief attention being directed to the English-speaking population, except in the Missions in Galway, and except in such districts as may not be occupied by the Irish Society, and this object is carried on with cordial good-will to the Irish Society, labouring in their important sphere among the Irish-speaking population.

"In pursuing this object, the Committee adopt the following Regulations:—

"I. At the request of Incumbents, they will aid in supporting Assistant Ministers, in parishes containing a large Roman-Catholic population. The nomination and appointment of these Ministers to be subject to Rule VII., being similar to that of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, with the understanding, that ministration to the Roman-Catholics shall be their distinct and peculiar object.

"II. Assistant Ministers may also be appointed, under the direction of the Bishop, for the Roman-Catholics of a whole diocese.

"III. In parishes where the Incumbent would be favourable to such efforts, the temporary services of able and experienced Clergymen may be engaged, in visiting districts, in giving lectures, and in preaching to the Roman-Catholics.

"IV. Courses of Lectures, by competent lecturers, on the great subjects in controversy between the Churches of England and Rome, will be encouraged and upheld in the principal towns in Ireland.

"V. The Committee to be at liberty, according to its resources, to adopt any measures that may tend to the furtherance of the conversion of the Roman-Catholic population of Ireland, by means consistent with the principles of the United Church of England and Ireland; and to maintain friendly communication with all Church of England Societies seeking the spiritual welfare of Ireland.

"VI. The Committee will gladly be the medium of sending any aid which contributors may wish to appropriate to the religious societies they have already assisted; and a friendly intercourse shall be maintained with other Protestants engaged in the same benevolent design of communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Roman-Catholics of Ireland.

"VII. No grant from the Society's funds for the benefit of any parish or district is to be made, unless the Incumbent himself shall apply, or sanction the application for aid, and shall furnish to the Committee sufficient proof of the exigency of the case. The nomination of an Assistant shall always be left with the Clergyman to whom aid is given, the Committee claiming only full satisfaction as to the qualifications of his nominee; who, when approved, will be under engagement only to the Clergyman by whom he is employed, and be solely responsi-

ble to him. Grants from the Society towards the support of an Assistant are made to the Clergyman to whom aid is given, and are voted for one year."

CONCURRENCE OF CLERGY.

It has always been the professed aim and the duty of the National Establishment of England and Ireland, to seek the conversion of the Roman-Catholics in our parishes to the pure scriptural faith; according to the following Canon, binding upon both branches of the United Church:—

"Every Minister being a Preacher, and having any Popish recusant or recusants in his parish, and thought fit by the Bishop of the Diocese, shall labour diligently with them from time to time, thereby to reclaim them from their errors. And if he be no preacher, or not such a preacher, then he shall procure, if he can possibly, some that are preachers, so qualified, to take pains with them for that purpose. If he can procure none, then he shall inform the Bishop of the Diocese thereof, who shall not only appoint some neighbour, preacher or preachers, adjoining, to take that labour upon them, but himself also, as his important affairs will permit him, shall use his best endeavour by instruction, persuasion, and all good means he can devise, to reclaim both them and all others within his diocese so affected."

The weight of this responsibility being felt by many of the clergy, it became very desirable that some members of the Committee should confer with their Irish brethren, who meet in large numbers in Dublin, to attend the anniversaries of the religious societies in the month of April. Accordingly, the Honorary Secretaries, the late * Rev. E. Bickersteth, and the Rev. A. R. C. Dallas, undertook, at the request of the Committee, to visit Ireland for that purpose, in April, 1849.

Entirely unconnected with this deputation, the Irish Clergy, who ordinarily meet at that season, had appointed the following subjects for consideration: 1st, their duty as ministers, especially at this time, to stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel; 2ndly, that no portion of the population of their country should be regarded as out of the sphere of their ministration; and, 3rdly, the most prudent and efficacious means, consistently with the discipline of our Church, of bringing the truths of the gospel to bear upon the minds of the Roman-Catholics.

The deputation from this Society were present at the conference, and were delightfully impressed with the piety, unanimity, and

* This eminent servant of Christ, "whose praise is in all the Churches," took a leading part in these missions from the first. He is succeeded as honorary secretary by his nephew, the Rev. Robert Bickersteth, rector of St. Giles-in-the-Fields.

earnestness with which their Irish brethren, laying aside all minor matters, discussed frankly and fully these important subjects, and came with one accord to conclusions in full harmony with the proposed plans of the "Society for Irish Church Missions."

After hearing the statement of the deputation, at a meeting arranged for the purpose, the Rev. Dr. Singer, of Trinity College, Dublin [now Regius Professor of Divinity, and Archdeacon of Raphoe], being in the chair, the clergy present passed some important resolutions—thanking the deputation for "coming over to help them," expressing their convictions that great openings were occurring for preaching the gospel to their Roman-Catholic parishioners, and that, while they felt a deep sense of their duty in this respect, they would cordially avail themselves of such assistance as the Irish Society and Irish Church Missions could afford. Upwards of 200 of the clergy present signed these resolutions. The deputation then proceeded to Cork, and a similar manifestation took place there.

THE CASTELKERKE MISSION.

The first place chosen for missionary operations of a permanent kind, was Castelkerke, a lovely spot, on the shores of Lough Corrib, in West Galway, containing a scattered population of about 1,200. In this poor and miserable locality, Mr. Dallas had been staying for some time. During his visit he had preached to the people, who assembled from the mountains in a small school-house which had been built by the Rev. Edwin L. Moore, the rector of Cong, and Mrs. Blake. Mr. Moore had previously delivered lectures in this place, although fourteen English miles from Cong, and the people showed some readiness to receive instruction; but no *open* manifestation had taken place, or *public* demonstration in favour of Protestantism. Mr. Dallas, with the consent of the rector, frequently visited this remote place. Scripture readers and schoolmasters were sent to the neighbourhood, and numbers attended the sermons delivered. Soon the children crowded to the school-room: a school-house boat was built to convey them across the lake, and in length as many as *fifty-four* persons, on the 12th of March, 1847, expressed their determination to leave the Church of Rome, and successful had the scripture readers, &c., been. The next month, 13 children attended the day-school, and 43, exclusive of stragglers, the night one, making it necessary for another addition to be made to the already enlarged school-house, the converts increasing every day throughout the neighbouring districts.

Mr. Dallas visited Castelkerke during the summer of 1847, and again in December following. On this occasion, upwards of 160 adults and 147 children, all Romanists, or converts, crowded to hear him preach the glad tidings of a free and full salvation, "without money and without price," through the finished work of Jesus, our Saviour and substitute; and as they agreed to attend the ministrations of a resident missionary, if one was obtained, Mr. Dallas, accompanied by Mr. Moore, waited forthwith on the Bishop of Tuam, represented the state of things in that district, and requested his lordship to ordain one, which, after due deliberation, he consented to do, and Mr. John O'Callaghan, who had laboured some time as a lay-agent, was ordained by the bishop on the 21st of May 1848, and went forth with faithful zeal to preach to his fellow-countrymen "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The reformation soon gained ground in various parts near and around Castelkerke, and a large school-house has since been built, through the liberality of Colonel Lewis, at Glan, for the accommodation of the numbers of children and converts who now assemble in that place. The agents of the society were much opposed by the Romish priests, and others who were influenced by them. In Oughterard, a solemn event occurred to one, who called on the people from the altar of the chapel in Oughterard to join him in cursing the Jumpers, and that "if they did not drive them away as the froth of the river, they would find that the vengeance of God would come upon him or them." On the following Wednesday he was struck with paralysis; this caused considerable excitement; and the effect of the missionary *praying* for him, softened the hearts of many, and conciliated them—the contrast being so marked between the *cursing* priest and the *praying* minister.

Mr. Moinah was soon ordained for Oughterard; his labours there were greatly blessed. He has since been moved to another important post (Moyrus, near Roundstone), and the Rev. John O'Callaghan, missionary at Castelkerke, has lately been appointed by the Bishop of Tuam, rector of Oughterard. On the 4th of June, 1848 the school-house at Castelkerke became so crowded as to cause considerable inconvenience to the officiating clergymen (Mr. Dallas and Mr. O'Callaghan) as well as to the people themselves. About 400 assembled inside it, and others around the porch and doors. Daily the reformation progressed, though Mr. O'Callaghan, and the converts here have had much to contend with, and encountered opposition of an unexpected kind, which it is unnecessary to detail.

On his taking leave of the congregation of Castelkerke, on the

16th of November, 1851, he was presented by the converts with a handsome Polyglot Bible, accompanied by an address.

Since Mr. O'Callaghan's appointment to Oughterard, the missionary work has remarkably progressed. He has kindly given up the glebe land for a model school, which will give considerable employment in the neighbourhood to the remaining Romanists and converts, and a practical instructor in agriculture has been engaged. The parish church is to be considerably enlarged. The schools have had a large accession in the number attending, and everything is going on in a most satisfactory way. Two *pervert* missionaries have lately visited Oughterard (Messrs Montgomery and Marshall), but not a single convert has gone back.

THE CLIFDEN MISSION.

The next important opening for missionary work, in connexion with this society, was in Clifden, about thirty miles west of Castlkerke, at the remote end of West Galway. Close to this town resided a godly man, Hyacinth D'Arcy, Esq., a magistrate for the county, the proprietor of Clifden Castle and Estates, a gentleman of considerable influence. On the 1st of October, 1847, Mr. Dallas promised Mr. D'Arcy that missionary agents should immediately be sent to commence operations in Clifden, who began their labours the first week in January, 1848, under his superintendence;—250 children soon assembled in the Clifden schools, and the balance of a fund being at Mr. D'Arcy's disposal, similar schools were immediately opened in Ballycoaree, Fakeragh, Errislanon, and Sellerna, with such masters as could be obtained at the moment.

An Irish Teacher heard one of the mission agents lecture on the passage, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given unto men whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv., 12.) Seeing that it agreed with the apostle's doctrine, and that the priest was following in the steps of the chief priests of old, he read this verse unceasingly to his friends, which struck at the very root of Romanism. As the people in great numbers "gave heed unto the word," the agents were considerably multiplied, and in the following October, Mr. Dallas preached to a congregation of 500, collected at the old schoolhouse at Sellerna. Memorials were presented to him, praying for schools to be established in Errismore, Claggan, and Barratrough. Schoolmasters were soon appointed, and other schools opened in the adjoining districts.

In February, 1849, the Bishop of Tuam ordained two mission-

ary clergymen, one for Sellerna, the other for Errislanon and Ballyconree. Mr. Dallas repeated his visits to these quarters ; in one day he preached to six congregations, some of them exceeding in number 500. New school-houses were built to accommodate the influx of attendants, and the Lord manifestly prospered the work.

The Rev. Roderic Ryder, one of the missionaries, thus wrote from Clifden:—

“ April 16, 1850.

“ . . . I beg to remark that, from my own experience as a priest, formerly of the Romish Church, the extent of the Lord’s work cannot be judged of by the numbers who openly renounce Popery. There is another criterion, and a very good one, to be found in the numbers who absent themselves from the confessional and the mass-house ; and if we consider this also, we will then, indeed, have much reason to admit and confess the hand of the Lord ; for the Romanist is bound, under pain of mortal sin, to confess his sins at least twice a year, and to attend at mass each Sunday and holiday, if he can do so.

“ At the last station of confessions published in the town of Clifden, there were but three persons at Ballyconree, twelve at Streamstown, and at the other stations in the same proportion, and their chapels they acknowledged to be empty ; and in no one instance were they able to prevail on one of the parents to take their children from the schools. The two thousand children now attending the schools are so many little missionaries, reading the word of God for their parents and relatives.”

The efforts of Mr. D’Arcy, as lay-superintendent of these missions, have been greatly blessed. This worthy servant of the Lord has lately been ordained by the Bishop of Tuam, and on the 21st of July, 1851, was presented by his Lordship with the living of Clifden ; a suitable acknowledgment of his faithful and disinterested zeal.

LATE PROGRESS.

In the confirmation tour of the Bishop of Tuam, held in October, 1849, the number of *converts* confirmed in Oughterard, Castlkerke, Clifden, and Sellerna, amounted to 401, all brought to the knowledge of the truth through the instrumentality of the Society for Irish Church Missions. In September, 1851, the Bishop again visited the various stations of the mission in West Galway, and confirmed 743 persons; of whom 31 only were original Protestants—thus leaving 712 converts who came forward to receive this rite; 78 anxious to do so, were kept back from considerations in connexion with their apparent youthfulness, and 113 were forcibly prevented at Sellerna, and at other places, by their parents and employers, on this occasion, from partaking of this ordinance of the church ; 25 applied too late to be examined. Had all these been confirmed, with 45 who lived in places too remote to attend, the total number of *converts* admitted to this rite would have been 973:

In the district of West Galway there are now between 5000 and 6000 converts in connexion with this society, where in 1840, not 500 Protestants were to be found. For the accommodation of these converts the Bishop of Tuam has lately issued an Appeal to raise funds for the building of eight new churches, (the one at Sellerna to be capable of holding 900,) and the enlargement of two others. These converts remain steadfast in the faith, though many of them are bitterly persecuted by their relatives; several have died in Christ, refusing to the last to send for "the priest," affirming "they have a great High-Priest in heaven, able and willing to intercede for them." In this district of the country upwards of 3500 children are daily attending the Mission Schools, and are instructed in the Scriptures, which they delight to read. These often prove a blessing to their parents, in conveying from their schools the information they receive, whereby, many of the aged and infirm have learned the way of salvation,—thus, out of the mouths of these babes has God perfected His praise? They are each of them, more or less "able to give to him that asketh, a reason of the hope that is in them." On asking a girl in the Streamstown (or Barratrough) school-house "What is it to believe in Christ?" the reply she made would put to shame many more advanced, and under greater advantages from their youth; she said—"It is the Spirit of God moving the soul to lean upon Jesus, and trust Him for salvation!" Would to God this explanation of what faith in Christ is, were apprehended by our young and old! In visiting these stations in the far west, one cannot but observe the decrepid and famine-stricken appearance of many—yet the eye brightens up, and the whole countenance changes when Jesus and His salvation is the subject of conversation. The eagerness and facility which they exhibit in finding out passages of Scripture is remarkable, and nothing they delight in more than holding a controversy with their priests or neighbours, concerning the way in which a sinner can be saved.

There are various Irish teachers employed in this district, to teach the people to read the Scriptures in Irish. Many of the school children, who are more advanced, occupy their leisure hours in this way, and Mr. D'Arcy, writing from Clifden, early in 1851, thus expresses his thankfulness at the important progress that has been made:—

"Thank God, the work goes on here splendidly, fast increasing through every part of the district. The congregations immense—the schools full. Over 2600 scholars passed in the inspection of April; may there be many of them to meet the Lord at his coming!"

PERSECUTION.

The persecution some of the children endure is very grievous. The following account has been already before the public, but is again inserted here, for the only way to check the violence of the Romanists, is to give publicity, as far as possible, to their dark and abominable deeds.

Taken from the journal of a tour in the County of Galway, in company with the Rev. Alex. R. C. Dallas, in June, 1850.

"On Friday, 14th June, 1850, several hundred children assembled at the Castle, taking the opportunity of Mr. and Mrs. Dallas's visit, to show their gratitude to the friends who have established the schools, and thank them for their kindness and Christian labours on their behalf. About eleven o'clock sixty-two of the *Connemara orphans reached the *entrée*, followed by the children of some of the district schools which are in connexion with the Clifden mission. As they came down, in the most perfect order (the several masters and mistresses being with their respective schools); they read and presented addresses to Mr. Dallas, who received them on the steps of the castle. While the children were being formed into two bodies, boys and girls, to hear Mr. Dallas's reply (the number present amounting to 1260), intelligence was brought us that a mob had beaten and scattered 400 or 500 of the Erismore children, on their approaching the town of Clifden, at Ardbear—that one of the teachers had been nearly killed, and that the Rev. Mr. Kilbride, the missionary clergyman, was severely cut and wounded. Mr. D'Arcy immediately proceeded to Clifden, and found the report was correct. In about an hour afterwards, Mr. Kilbride, who endeavoured to save the children, came up to the Castle, in an exhausted state, without his hat, and two or three other men soon afterwards, who were a good deal cut and bruised.

"It appears that some of Dr. Mac-Hale's disciples had collected a party of men to beat them, and having urged them on in their ungodly project, prevented the poor, unprotected, children from joining the assemblage at the Castle, with the exception of thirty-five or forty, who escaped.

"During the afternoon, many of the Irish Church Missions Society's agents were struck with stones, thrown by the infuriated men and boys, who were supplied with drink (two barrels of porter) by those who instigated and encouraged them in these deeds of violence.

"The Claggan children were considerably detained; one of the teachers had his head cut with a stone. The Sellerna schools providentially escaped, by taking a short cut over the mountains."

The difficulty of access to the Romanists in some places is considerable, especially in such popish towns as Drogheda and Tuam, where "Paul Cullen," and "John Mac-Hale," popish bishops,

* This institution was founded Oct. 19, 1849, by the Rev. Mr. Dallas, assisted by the Rev. John Gregg, and the Rev. Hyacinth D'Arcy, and originated from the circumstance of their seeing a helpless orphan child in danger of being devoured by a large pig, on the road to Ballyconree. It is supported by private subscription.—75 orphans are now comfortably maintained in it.

reside. In November, 1851, two readers were dreadfully beaten in Drogheda, and the following copy of the journal of a Tuam reader, will be read with interest, exhibiting as it does the real spirit of Popery :—

“ *December 3rd, 1851.*—Proceeded to Tuam, when I learned that my partner had been violently set on by a mob on the 28th ultimo, and narrowly escaped being killed.

“ 4th, 5th, and 6th.—I went out each of these days, and was each time followed by a large mob, which compelled me either to return home, or seek refuge in the bishop’s yard.

“ 8th.—The trial having come off this day, I attended and remained all day in the court-house.

“ *The Trial.*—The trial came off before five Roman-Catholic magistrates and one Protestant magistrate. There were *six cases* of assault brought before the court, all growing out of the riot of the 28th—my partner K——’s case and five others, the plaintiffs being the Lord Bishop’s men. All the assaults were proved upon unexceptionable testimony, but notwithstanding each case was *dismissed, seriatim*, without even a caution ! During the trial, a number of priests were stationed within the court, and a vast mob without, who rent the air with shouts at the conclusion of each case. After the trial the complainants had to be escorted home by policemen. The mob then gathered about the house of Mr. A——, where my partner and I lodged, and the owner of the shop was obliged to close his doors and put up his shutters amidst the deafening shouts of the hundreds collected without. Nothing but the presence of the police prevented the mob from breaking into the house. They then retired to Dr. MacHale’s, and kindled a large bonfire before his door, during the burning of which, they continued to keep up the shouting till they separated.

“ 9th.—This day my partner went out, and was again assailed, pelted, and kicked, the policemen refusing to act, except by an order from a magistrate. I went out afterwards, and narrowly escaped the same treatment, by taking refuge in the bishop’s court-yard.

“ 10th.—I ventured out again this day, and again escaped from a large mob, who pursued me to the bishop’s court-yard. Afterwards the same mob, consisting of several hundred persons, met the Rev. Mr. Seymour, provost and Vicar of Tuam, and during the presence and sanction of four priests, assailed the reverend gentleman with rude pushes, and the most insulting and violent shouts, until he arrived at Mr. Brereton’s, the magistrate. Afterwards the mob met and attacked Mr. Seymour’s servant man, whom they treated in a similar manner. One of the parties who assailed him being arrested by a policeman, a priest came down from St. Jarlath’s College, and rescued the prisoner from the policeman. Mr. Seymour’s servant has since left in consequence, through fear of his life.

“ 11th and 12th.—These days we were obliged to remain indoors until nightfall. On the evening of the 12th we moved from A——’s to the Mall school-house, Mr. A—— showing impatience at our remaining in his house any longer to the prejudice of his business.

“ 13th.—We are still obliged to remain in-doors, in consequence of the excitement in the town.

“ *Monday, 15th.*—We are still obliged to remain in-doors, in consequence of the continued excited state of the town. This evening, at 6 o’clock, an additional force of police arrived in Tuam, and seemed to make a considerable impression in the town.

“ 16th.—We went out this day for a short time, but we were quickly

obliged to return, a mob having collected and pursued us down to the Mall school-house. The police-force who lately arrived in the town, having, as we understand, brought new orders, four of the ringleaders, including the *priest's clerk*, who headed the rioters, were taken into custody, and have to stand their trial for this new aggression.

"17th, 18th, 19th, 20th.—The town still continues in a state of much excitement. We have gone out each of these days, and were each day surrounded by the mob, both going and returning. The police alone keeps them from laying hands on us. Our visiting is necessarily stopped while this state of things continues.

"On Wednesday the 17th, the Rev. Edward Ellis, from Dublin, arrived, and preached in Tuam on the same evening to a crowded audience.

"Monday, 22nd.—This day the trial of the four persons arrested on the 16th came off in the petty sessions' court, before six Roman-Catholic magistrates who tried the previous cases; all the defendants were dismissed without penalty or caution. After the trial, the Rev. Mr. Seymour was again surrounded in the street by the mob, and had to be escorted home by the police.

"23rd and 24th.—The town continues in the same state. Went out as usual, but were obliged to return after a short time.

"25th.—This being Christmas-day, only went to and from church—the town being greatly crowded with its idle population. This day the Rev. Mr. Seymour was grossly assailed, and pelted with stones and mud after visiting one of his sick parishioners.

"26th.—Went out this day to the Bishop's-yard; was surrounded, as usual, going and coming, by the mob—the police accompanied me all the time.

"27th.—I went out this day as far as the glebe-house; being market-day, the people appeared too much engaged to congregate as usual; a mob of boys and girls, however, followed me home with the usual shouting.

"29th, 30th, 31st.—I am still in the same predicament. Every time I go out I am pursued and shouted at from place to place, and obliged to return home.

"GENERAL REMARKS.—In my last journal, under this head, I noticed the religious statistics of the town—that there were 150 Protestants, and perhaps over 6000 Roman-Catholics. In consequence of this preponderance of Romanism there is a corresponding dearth of Protestant patronage, so that poor persons disposed to leave the chapel are sure to be bereft of employment.

"I am now in a condition to say that numbers here would 'come out' if they were not subject to this species of persecution."*

The influence and power of the Popish bishop and his emissaries is, however, daily on the decline in districts where the Reformation has gained ground. In the town of Clifden,—where Mr. Dallas was burned in effigy,—Mr. D'Arcy, the magistrate, struck in a mob consisting of at least a thousand persons,—the Rev. Mr. Kilbride knocked down and nearly murdered,—and about 400 or 500 children cruelly beaten with sticks and stones,—all which happened in or near Clifden, in June, 1850,—so great a change has taken

* The fervent prayers of the people of the Lord are requested in behalf of the agents of this society.

place within the short period of a year, that when Mac Hale, their “archbishop,” was actually in the town, in June, 1851, with a body-guard of ‘*Italian police*,’ not an insult was offered towards the Protestant bishop Plunket, Mr. Dallas, or his party, in Clifden at the time. An attempt was made by a few children to get up an illumination for Dr. Mac Hale, which utterly failed,—with the exception of a light in two of the windows of ‘Hart’s Hotel,’ not a candle was to be seen! In the morning of that day the Popish bishop visited Derrygimla, and was received by a number not amounting to forty, in a place where formerly he was almost worshipped, nor would his congregation have increased, had it not been for the accession he received from the neighbouring Union Workhouse, where a message had been sent, summoning their attendance. As he was driving away, our good Protestant bishop reached the mission school-house, in which were 170 children! All the converts remained steadfast, and greatly cheered the bishop and Mr. Dallas, &c.

Every means are used by the priests to gain the children back to Popery;—a remarkable instance of undue influence exercised by one of them, is to be found in the following account:—

“A lad, named C——, attending the Cleggan school, was supposed to be quite an orphan, as his father was known to have died of famine; and it was reported that his mother, who had gone to America some time before, had died on the passage. C—— had been at the school about two years. About a fortnight ago the priest received a letter from the boy’s mother, with five pounds to send him out to her. When the priest sent for the boy he was overjoyed to hear that his mother was still alive, and that he should see her again. But the priest said he could not give it to him because he had forsaken the faith; but if he would now repent, and come the next Sunday to mass and confession, he would forgive him, and give him the money. The boy refused, and said if he gave him fifty pounds he would not,—he would trust God to provide for him. A few days afterwards the Priest sent his two uncles to persuade him; but still he refused. When the priest found him steadfast in his purpose not to return to Romanism, he gave the money to a shopkeeper in Clifden to give to him—and he is gone off in great delight. The day he left the school, he clasped his Bible to his heart, and said he would never give it up. ‘And who knows,’ said he, ‘but God may make me the means of bringing my dear mother, and many others in that distant land, to the knowledge of the truth.’”

THE DUBLIN MISSION.

One of the most promising Missions in connexion with the Society, is that now carried on in the city of Dublin, where are located 200,000 Romanists.

A great and effectual door has been opened here, in the providence of God, for preaching the Gospel to the Roman-Catholics—

the work first commenced in November, 1848, in St. Michan's parish.

Lectures in Lent had been delivered in the city for years past, in some churches. A faithful few had always lifted up the banner of the truth, and displayed it with effect ; but no systematic well-organized scheme had been set in operation for the pulling down of Satan's stronghold, until this Society took up the work, which the Rev. C. S. Stanford, rector of St. Michan's, and his curates, commenced in that parish, in the close of 1848.

Lectures were delivered, every Tuesday evening, in the large school-room attached to the grave-yard at the back of the church ; only a few came at first, but when they obtained publicity, the school-house became so crowded, by both Protestants and Roman-Catholics, that it was found advisable to transfer them, in Lent, into the church, which is capable of holding nearly 2,000 people.

The late Edward Bickersteth and Mr. Dallas, who came as a deputation from the committee of " the Special Fund," to the clerical meetings, in April, 1849, held a meeting of the Dublin clergy in Trinity College; it was then resolved to form a " Committee of Correspondence," for the carrying on and conducting the controversy in that city, and various preachers enlisted themselves as willing to co-operate in this mission. The Rev. C. F. Mac-Carthy (curate of St. Michan's) was afterwards appointed to superintend some readers, who were then, for the first time engaged to go, two and two, through the streets, lanes and alleys, inviting Romanists to attend the sermons, &c., conversing with them freely on the subject of religion, distributing amongst them handbills and tracts, and pressing on the people the importance of abandoning a system which leads men to perdition, instead of salvation through Christ.

These men (their numbers being now considerably increased) meet the missionary every Saturday for prayer, instruction, comfort and advice; they read their journals, receive directions, and are affectionately encouraged to proceed in their work.

The priests of Dublin, finding their system so strenuously and unremittingly assailed, determined on trying an experiment, which has proved at all times most hazardous and dangerous to Romanism. Dr. O'Connell, a priest from Waterford, preached on the controversy " in reply to the attacks made by Protestant divines ;" and, early in June, 1849, the inhabitants of Dublin were not a little astonished to find that Dr. Meyler, of Westland Row, put forth a placard, announcing that " A brief exposition of the Epistle of St. Paul to the *Hebrews*, and an elucidation of the oneness and all-

sufficiency of the sacrifice of the cross" would be given, "with an explanation of the ceremonies of the mass." This announcement caused, as may be imagined, considerable excitement, and an anxious crowd of all classes attended the chapel in Westland Row, to hear how the UNBLOODY sacrifice of the MASS was to be reconciled with the ninth and tenth chapters of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, especially with Heb. ix., 22, where St. Paul asserts, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission."

It is unnecessary to say, the people went away disappointed and dissatisfied. No explanation was given on the occasion, nor on any subsequent day, though some returned with the hope of hearing it. On the 6th of June an excommunication took place, of a poor fellow who had been engaged circulating hand-bills outside the chapel doors, and the exhibition of this "Romish way of settling controversy" gave rise to the publication of the "Letters of a True Catholic," in the *Warder* newspaper, which have continued almost without interruption, exposing Romanism doctrinally and practically in a most masterly humorous style. The first appeared in the *Warder* of June 9, 1849. They have been read by priests and people. Dr. O'Connell has frequently brought them with him into the pulpit, and attempted to make a reply, which has only served to excite the greater interest, and draw the attention of hundreds to them.

The plan adopted for circulating notices of the sermons, is by handbills, placards, and advertisements. The first handbill was published on the 21st of June, 1849, containing questions on "the Sacrifice of the Mass," with quotations from the Douay version of the Scriptures, which Roman-Catholics respect and reverence as the word of God. Other subjects have been treated on weekly, and these handbills have been circulated everywhere. Several *hundred thousands* of them have been issued, each containing three or four sets of questions. The following are specimens:—

"JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ONLY.

"Will any priest defend *salvation by works* in the face of the following portions of God's word:—

"Not *by works* of justice, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.'—Titus, iii., 5. 'Being justified FREELY by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'—Romans, iii., 24. 'And if by *grace*, it is not now by *works*; otherwise grace is no more GRACE.'—Romans, xi., 6.—*Douay Bible*.

"Mark St. Paul's doctrine—'For by *grace* you are SAVED THROUGH FAITH, and that not of yourselves, for it is the *gift* of God. NOT OF WORKS, that no man may glory.'—Eph. ii., 8, 9.—*Douay Bible*.

"And is not St. Peter's doctrine the same, in his sermon to Cornelius the Centurion. 'By His name (Christ's) ALL receive remission of sins, *who believe in Him*'?—Acts, x., 43.—*Douay Bible*.

"INVOCATION OF B. V. MARY, AND THE SAINTS.

"How *can* the blessed Virgin and the other saints hear *all* prayers, from *all* parts of the earth, unless they can be *present everywhere*, at *all* times, and know the thoughts and desires of *all hearts*? Of the Infinite Almighty God it is written—'For thou *only* knowest the hearts of all the children of men.'—3 Kings, viii., 39.—*Douay Bible*.

"Will any priest prove, out of God's word, that the Son of God, our Saviour, Mediator, and Intercessor, is not ABLE, and WILLING, and READY, at all times, to hear, to help, and 'to save for ever them that come to God by Him'?—Heb. vii., 25.—*Douay Bible*.

"'Jesus saith to him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father *but by me*.'—St. John, xiv., 6: and again, 'Come unto Me, *all* you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.'—St. Matt., xi. 28.—*Douay Bible*.

"Is it not, then, a fearful wrong and disobedience to the Lord Jesus, to have recourse to Mary, or Joseph, or any other *creature*, instead of our loving and merciful CREATOR and SAVIOUR?"

[Fifty-three subjects, such as the above, are now published in a valuable tract, in two parts, called "Vital Questions for Roman Catholics," and can be had on application to Mr. Evans, 6, Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, price one penny *each part*.]

The following letter, taken from the *Warder* newspaper, of the 4th of August, 1849, will give some idea of the excitement which prevails, and the spirit of enquiry which these handbills have awakened:—

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'WARDER.'"

"Friday, 3rd August, 1849.

"SIR,—Hoping that you will be so kind as to insert this letter in your paper, I have been induced to write a statement of what took place between me and the Rev. Father Sheppard, in St. Audoen's new chapel, on Wednesday morning, 1st August. Having read some quotations from the Douay Bible on some placards and handbills announcing controversial sermons in Michan's Church, I went, I confess at first from motives of curiosity, to hear how Roman-Catholic doctrine could be put down by Roman-Catholic Bible quotations. I was thunderstruck at what I heard from time to time, but at last the doctrine of *intention* made me decide on getting some explanation from my old father confessor, to enable me to make some defence against some Protestant young men of my acquaintance. Accordingly, I went on Wednesday morning to confession to Father Sheppard, and to make my statement more clear, I shall give the exact questions and answers that took place between the priest and myself.

"After going into the box and begging the priest's blessing, I began with saying:—

"*Penitent*.—Dear reverend father, it is now three months since I went to confession before, and during that time I was led, by reading

verses from our Bible on Protestant placards and handbills, to go and hear sermons in Michan's Church, which have left my mind in a very tortured state.

"*Priest.*—It was the devil that made you go, sir, and not the verses. What business had you going at all? Can't you stay in your own church?

"*Penitent.*—But, sir, I have got a handbill for this week, and just say whether the statements on it are true or not, and quiet my doubts at once.

"*Priest.*—I would not make that much of you as to notice your doubts, or read that lying scrap of paper. How bad you want controversy.

"*Penitent.*—But, reverend sir, consider the tortured state of my mind, and this is a very bad way to satisfy my doubts as to the true way to worship God, towards the salvation of my soul.

"*Priest.*—Oh, dear me! how I feel for you, how I pity you!—what a way you are in!—how badly you are off for controversy!

"(N.B.—These last words were spoken with an execrable sneer and contemptuous mockery of my uneasiness and doubtings.)

"*Penitent.*—But, dear reverend sir, is this a way for the priest of God to treat a poor sinner when he comes to get peace with that God, and to get any doubts removed which may have arisen in his mind through the reading of the Roman-Catholic Bible quotations, and on account of which there are numbers doubting as well as me?

"*Priest.*—(In a thundering voice, loud enough to be heard outside the box, and on account of which I was ashamed to come out and walk through the chapel)—'Begone, sir, I care not how many are doubting. I shall enter into no discussion with any one; so go about your business' (and he banged the slide door so violently as to nearly take the top of my nose off).

"Does Father Sheppard think it was to a dog he was speaking? The resolution with which I shall prove the truth of the statement made above, should I be called on to do so, will show Father Sheppard how far he is mistaken, in spite of the vengeance and insult that such men as Father Sheppard can hurl at me. I remain

"THE SUFFERING INQUIRER."

The "confessor" alluded to (Father Sheppard), has since been suddenly summoned into the presence of his Maker and Judge; whilst officiating at the altar of an idol-God, he was seized with an illness, which terminated, the same night, in death. What serious reflections should such an event awaken in the minds of those who are spared! May the Lord yet "grant them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth" which he despised!

The priests of Westland Row soon withdrew from the contest. Dr. O'Connell, of Waterford, is the only man who continued the controversy in two chapels of Dublin, and even he has now been silent for some months.* The priests have found that the more

* Since the above was written, the reverend doctor commenced a series of Lectures on the "Handbook to the Romish Controversy," which were consecutively replied to by our clergy in St. Michan's church, on Thursday evenings. The interest occasioned was greater than ever. The crowds attending St. Michan's were immense.

publicity is given to the subject, the worse for them, and have now to lament over the hundreds who have abandoned Romanism, and attend, diligently, the ministrations of the Protestant clergy.

CHALLENGE TO PRIESTS DECLINED.

An effectual mode was adopted in October, 1850, to silence the priests of Dublin. They have been over and over again challenged to prove that "the present faith of the Church of Rome is the ancient Catholic faith," or to "produce their Church's interpretation of a single chapter of the entire word of God." To put this to the test, the Rev. Messrs. Edward Nangle, R. J. L. M'Ghee, J. N. Griffin, and C. M. Fleury, proposed to meet any of the priests at a public meeting in the Rotunda, on any day the priests themselves might choose; * and that if they could satisfactorily prove that the creed of Pope Pius IV.—the peculiar creed of the Church of Rome—was ever proposed to be subscribed, as a creed, by any man in the Christian Church before the 9th of December, 1564, when it was set forth in a Bull by the then Pope of Rome, then those four clergymen undertook to subscribe that creed, and become members of the Church of Rome.

Although this pledge was given, October 17, 1850, and sent round in a printed circular to every priest, &c., in Dublin, and extensively circulated amongst the people, yet not one of them has ventured to give any answer to these proposals—either publicly, from the pulpit, or through the press—or privately, by conference or correspondence. This fact has awakened many a thinking Romanist to the real state of the case, and an important address was printed by "The Dublin Committee of Correspondence to the Society for Irish Church Missions," calling on the laity to consider these things, and allow themselves no longer to be led blindfold by these "blind guides," for, "if the blind lead the blind, they shall *both* fall into the ditch." This address contained a brief refutation of the novel articles of Pope Pius's creed. It was also published in the newspapers, &c.

A very valuable "Handbook † to the Romish Controversy" has since been published by the Rev. Chas. S. Stanford, prebendary of St. Michan's, "being a refutation in detail of the creed of Pope

* A public meeting was held in the Rotunda, on the 9th December, 1851, to commemorate the "birthday" of this creed. The priests were invited, by circular, to attend; but the half-platform reserved for them was empty.

† G. Herbert, 117, Grafton-street, Dublin, is the publisher.—Though it contains upwards of 250 pages, the price is only 6d., or if forwarded by post, 1s.

Pius the IV., on the grounds of scripture and reason." This, with other tracts on the subject, has caused a considerable spirit of enquiry, and has been the means of perplexing the priests, who are now continually taunted as they walk the streets and visit the houses of their once deluded votaries, because they would not stem the torrent which threatens to sweep all before it.

ADMISSIONS BY DUBLIN PRIESTS.

Priests, monks, friars, and nuns, are addressed by the Readers, as well as ordinary Romanists. No opportunity is lost of bringing the truth of the Gospel before them in their daily intercourse, nor has the effort been in vain in the Lord, as the following extracts from their journals testify.

5th September, 1851.

"Met a Roman-Catholic priest. Subject, 'Transubstantiation.' After a long argument he said that he believed the doctrine was not true. I pressed on him to separate from the Church of Rome when he knew that she taught false doctrines, and that he should not offer the sacrifice of the mass when he knew it to be false. He said that he never knew the falsity of the doctrine before. He gave us his name and address, and would be glad to see us at any time."

"Mr, — spoke with four priests, three gave their names and address."

(From another journal.)

5th September, 1851.

"We had a long conversation with a young priest on several doctrines of his church, which lasted two hours. He seemed to give up 'Transubstantiation' entirely. He told us at parting that he never got so much information before, and shook hands with us several times."

Controversial sermons were delivered in various churches during the Lent of 1850 and 1851, and have been continued for many months in some churches where the attendance was the largest. The large weekly placards posted on boards, and carried through the leading thoroughfares, with questions upon them, such as on the handbills, have continued to remind the passers-by of the reformation work. These are likewise posted in the lanes and bye-streets, and in vain have the priests endeavoured to dissuade their flocks from reading them,* or the advertisements in "*Saunders' News letter, &c.*" Rich and poor study the Scripture quotations,—learned

* A new placard has lately been posted, and is now carried through the streets:—

"A VITAL QUESTION.

"From how much Sin are True Believers cleansed by the blood of Christ?"

"ANSWER.

"'FROM ALL SIN.' For St. John saith—'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' 1 John, i., 7.—*Douay Bible.*

"If so, what need of Purgatory, Penances, Absolutions, Indulgences, Extreme Unction, Mass-Sacrifices, &c. &c.?"

and unlearned are now looking into these subjects. It is true the expense of all this is very great, but not greater than the value of *one* soul! It has been instrumental in leading *hundreds* "to cast their idols to the moles and to the bats." (Isaiah ii., 20.)

There is now a "controversial class for enquirers," held in St. Michan's School-house, every Tuesday evening, where any Roman-Catholic, priest or layman, may attend, and have his doubts solved. It commenced at the end of the year 1849, under the superintendence of the Rev. Chas. F. Mac Carthy, the missionary. The manner in which it is conducted is most praiseworthy, and his labours have been owned of the Lord in the manifest conversion of numbers of all ranks.

The school-room is now crowded to excess by persons of all classes, and many come from a distance to be present. Some are disappointed, and obliged to return home, or remain in the graveyard, the room only containing between 600 and 700. A Ladies' Association was formed in Dublin, in 1849. This has enabled the Dublin Mission to be partly self-supporting.

An interesting Report, dated January, 1852, has lately been published by this Association. The subjoined extracts give a fair idea of the progress that has been made, under the blessing of God:—

"The number of families visited in the year 1851 were 20,100, consisting of 54,936 individuals, almost all of whom were Roman-Catholics, making the average of monthly visits to be 1675 families of 4578 individuals, to whom the Gospel of Christ has been declared, contrasted with the errors of Romanism—to some for the first time. The head lay agent has followed up the work of the visitors through every district, and his testimony is, that an increased interest on the subject pervades the generality of these people. There are 300 converts (whose names can be produced) who have left Romanism since this mission commenced, and are now constant worshippers in our churches; many of them are in independent circumstances; one of these has been the means of bringing out of Popery twenty-five individuals of his own rank.

"The Inquiring Class in St. Michan's school-room on Tuesday evening, which, at the close of 1850, averaged sixty persons, has advanced to upwards of 700 (which is all the room will hold), and those who have attended it can bear witness to the number who are disappointed almost every evening at not getting in for want of room; these on a fine evening, may be seen formed into groups round Visitors in the churchyard, arguing on some controversial point.

"Owing to the liberal grant of the Bible Society, a large number of the Scriptures and portions are in circulation amongst these people—the Visitors trace the effect of these amongst them. And that God is blessing His own word may be witnessed by those who have observed many individuals who, some time since, argued stoutly in the class in favour of Romanism, now as earnestly endeavouring to win others over to its sacred truths.

"Many persons continue to call on Mr. MacCarthy at the church and at the office, and on Mr. M'Guigan, and some of the Visitors at their houses, for the purpose of making inquiries and receiving instruction. And a clergyman has stated that he knows of several respectable

persons who have become intelligent and interesting Protestants, who are not known to any other clergyman in the city.

"In St. Michan's Sunday school there is also a class for adult Roman-Catholics. On the 4th of January there were twenty-seven persons in this class, twenty-five of whom were or had been Roman-Catholics.

"Controversial lectures are now (January 20th, 1852) delivered on—

Sunday evening,	in St. Michan's church.
"	in St. Thomas's church.
Monday evening,	in St. Nicholas's school-room.
"	in St. James's school-room.
Tuesday evening,	(A Controversial Inquiry Class) in St. Michan's school-house.
"	in Trinity church.
Wednesday evening,	in St. Nicholas's church.
"	in Episcopal church, Upper Baggot-street.
"	in St. James's school-house (Inquiry).
Thursday evening,	in St. Michan's church.

"At each there is an average good attendance, and some are much crowded. Large numbers of Roman-Catholics of all classes are to be seen at some of these.

"In the neighbourhood of Dublin there are controversial lectures in Raheny, Kingstown, and Monkstown; in general well attended.

"In Dublin and its vicinity, there are from 8000 to 10,000 handbills with "Vital Questions to Roman-Catholics," distributed *every week*. These, with the placards, have been blessed of God, in raising up the spirit of inquiry so generally manifested.

"The Romish priests have not been idle during the past year; they have, from their altars, publicly prohibited their people from receiving the Visitors, denounced the controversial lectures and inquiring classes, and endeavoured by bribery and every means to stop (what *they* called) "a successful proselytism;" the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and nuns, are indefatigable, and in the Roman-Catholic schools in connexion with the National Board, give stirabout, broth, and bread to keep the children in them, besides giving to the parents. Roman-Catholic ladies are employed to visit families and induce them to take their children from Protestant schools, and make them go to the Roman-Catholic ones; and priests, in disguise, have visited the Protestant schools, questioning the teachers and children."

POPISH CURSE.

The persecution which the converts endure, even in Dublin, is very painful. One young man, formerly a student for the Romish priesthood, in Thurles College, who was converted through the instrumentality of the handbills, &c, and by attending the controversial sermons was immediately cast off by his parents. Two Popish Bishops waited on him in Dublin, and after striving in vain to win or woo him back to Popery, one of them at length stood up in the most dignified manner, and, protruding his "apostolic ring," proceeded with the greatest austerity to curse him. His concluding words were as follows;—"The curse of a mother's broken heart be upon you!—May God Almighty scald your heart in your dying bed, and command your soul to the lowest pit of hell!"—The young man replied that "such conduct only the more confirmed him in Protestantism; that he had then broken the apostolic precept, which

saith, 'bless, and curse not,'—You have cursed me—I bless you,'—and they parted.

The labours of individual clergymen in carrying on the controversy in Dublin, notwithstanding the pressure of other engagements, are such as to call forth the gratitude and thanks of all who are interested in this work of reformation. The continued efforts of Messrs. M'Ghee, Griffin, Fleury, Nangle, MacCarthy, Ellis, Day, Halahan, Kingston, Neville, Crampton, Craig, Verschoyle, Gregg, Dowling, Drury, Maconchy, O'Meara, and others, who occasionally assist in this "labour of love," have been attended with abundant fruits.—The Rev. R. J. L. M'Ghee, C. M. Fleury, and John Nash Griffin in particular, have devoted their time and their talents in a manner which has redounded to the glory of God, and the salvation of many souls.

EXTENT OF OPERATIONS.

The operations of the Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics of Ireland, are not however confined to Dublin or the region of Connemara and West Galway. An important work is also carrying on in the towns of Galway, Enniscorthy, Belfast, Carlow, Kilkenny, Drogheda, Portarlington, Tuam, Achill, &c. The Society affords the means of missionary effort to 29 local committees of clergy in various parts of thirteen counties in Ireland; and daily there are new openings presenting themselves, and applications to the Society for missionary agents.

AGENCY EMPLOYED.

The number in the following list does not include the agents in the employ of the several local committees for missions, whose salaries are paid by the Society, whilst the responsibility of engaging them rests with the local clergy. The lower instrumentality of Irish teachers, which is of very great importance in carrying on the work, includes 274 persons, who instruct 3,520 Romanists in reading the Irish Scriptures. The number of agents have lately been considerably increased, as the committee have been supplied with means to extend their instrumentality; but "what are they amongst so many?" If *four* times the amount contributed, were sent in, it would not meet the exigencies of Ireland. Daily there are new openings, which cannot be occupied for want of funds.—"Say not ye there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest,—Behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." (John iv., 35.) "The harvest truly is plen-

teous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." (Matt. ix., 37, 38.)

The following is a Summary of Agency of the Irish Church Missions, January, 1852.

No.	MISSIONS.	STATIONS.	Ordained Missionaries.	Lay Agents.	Readers.	Schoolmasters.	Schoolmistresses.	Total.	Schools.
1	CASTELKERKE .	1 Castelkerke .	..	..	3	..	..	3	1
		2 Kilmilkin .	..	..	2	1	..	3	1
		3 Curnamona .	..	..	1	..	1	2	1
		4 Lyons . . .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
2	LOUGH MASK .	5 Tourmakeady	..	..	3	1	1	5	2
		6 Partree . .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
3	OUGHTERARD .	7 Oughterard .	1	..	3	1	1	6	1
		8 Glan . . .	1	..	3	1	1	6	1
4	GALWAY . . .	9 Galway . . .	1	..	5	1	..	7	1
		10 Ross . . .	..	..	..	..	1	1	1
		11 Headford .	..	..	1	1	..	2	1
		12 Rooveagh .	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
		13 Tuam . . .	..	..	2	1	..	3	1
5	CONNEMARA .	14 Clifden . .	1	2	5	1	3	12	3
		15 Fakeragh .	..	..	..	..	1	1	1
		16 Salruck . .	1	..	2	1	..	4	1
		17 Ballynakill .	1	..	2	..	..	3	..
		18 Sellerna . .	1	..	7	1	..	9	1
		19 Cleggan . .	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		20 Claddaghduff	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		21 Omev . . .	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		22 Ballyconree .	1	..	4	1	1	7	2
		23 Barratrough .	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		24 Turbot Island	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		25 Errislanon .	..	..	2	1	1	4	1
		26 Ballinaboy .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
		27 Derrigimla .	1	..	3	1	1	6	2
		28 Aillebracke .	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		29 Dubolla . .	..	..	..	1	1	2	1
		30 Roundstone .	..	..	3	1	1	5	1
		31 Moyrus . . .	1	..	2	1	..	4	1
6	IAR CONNAUGHT	32 Inverin . .	1	..	5	2	..	8	1
		33 Spiddall . .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
		34 Casla . . .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
		35 Lettermore .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
7	SOUTH EASTERN	36 Enniscorthy .	1	..	2	1	1	5	1
		37 Mulrankin .	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
8	KILKENNY . .	38 Kilkenny . .	1	1	2	..	..	4	..
		39 Carlow . . .	..	..	2	..	..	2	..
		40 Portarlinton	..	..	2	..	..	2	..
9	DUBLIN . . .	41 Dublin . . .	2	3	27	3	..	35	..
10	DROGHEDA . .	42 Drogheda . .	..	1	1	..	..	2	..
10	Missions. .	42 Stations.	15	7	96	34	21	173	39

New missions have been commenced, in addition to the above list.

Since the opening of the Dublin and Galway Railway, in August, 1851, a number of English have visited the mission stations in the west, and in Dublin, &c., and returned with the most favourable impressions of the work. They have witnessed crowds of converts assembling in the various school-houses (which have been licensed for divine worship until the proposed churches are built), and they have thanked God that the preaching of the gospel has wrought such a change in these parts. They have visited the schools, and been delighted with the smiling faces of the dear little children, and deeply interested in their answering and improved social condition (with but few exceptions), notwithstanding their hardships, starvation, and distress—perhaps without a meal attending the schools, save a few shell-fish and sea-weed gathered from the rocks when the tide is out ! The following is the testimony of six gentlemen who have lately been in the west, and verifies the many reports which have recently been circulated in a similar manner as this has, through the medium of the public journals.

TESTIMONY OF SIX EYE-WITNESSES.

(From the "Times.")

"We, the undersigned, having visited West Galway for the purpose of personally testifying the progress of conversion from Romanism to the Established Church of England and Ireland, which have been made through the agency of the Society for Irish Church Missions, are anxious to bear our testimony that the published statements which have been put forth respecting its successful efforts, both as regards the scriptural education of the young and the number of converts from Romanism, are fully borne out by our personal inspection.

"We have had the privilege of attending the Bishop of Tuam on a tour made for the confirmation of converts from Romanism, being the second confirmation held for the same for the purpose in this district within the last two years ; 712 converts at seven different places have on this occasion received the rite of Confirmation, in addition to the 401 converts confirmed in the same district in October, 1849.

"We can also bear our testimony that the missionary clergymen employed by the society, so far from desiring to swell the number of their candidates, have exercised the greatest caution in admitting them to confirmation, refusing numbers whom they did not consider qualified, or who had not sufficient notice of their intention.

"Having also examined the children in the schools of the society which we visited—and in Connemara alone about 2000 are being instructed—we can bear our testimony to the scriptural knowledge of the children, which far exceeds what might have been expected in the short period of the establishment of the schools, and which we have no hesitation in saying will bear comparison with the best conducted schools in England.

"The marked change in the habits and demeanour of the people in those districts where the society's operations have been carried on is most plainly evidenced.

"The readiness which the Romanists are now showing through

the country to receive scriptural instruction, and the influence which the priests formerly exercised over their minds being now, from various circumstances, greatly impaired, an opportunity is afforded which, if not immediately taken advantage of, may never occur again, and call for public support to enable the society both to continue the work already so successfully commenced, as well as to extend it into other districts which are earnestly calling for its aid.

"The success of the experiments made by this society in this dark and priest-ridden district—where, with scarcely a single exception, no preparatory means had been used, or any attempt made to enlighten the minds of the Romanists—is an encouragement to persevere in these laudable efforts for the evangelisation of all Ireland, to the extension of which the want of funds is at present the only obstacle.

"CHRIST. L. LIGHTON, Bart., Vicar of Ellastone, Staffordshire.

"CHAS. FREWEN, M.P., East Sussex.

"ANTHONY LEFROY.

"JEFFERY LEFROY, Rector of Loughbrickland.

"ALFRED BLIGH HILL, Vicar of Morebath, and Rural Dean of Tiverton.

"FRANCIS P. SEYMOUR, Curate of Huntsham."

CHARGE OF BRIBERY REFUTED.

It has often been asked—"Is there any pecuniary relief given, which might hold out a false inducement to so many to become converts?"* which is to the effect that it is a standing rule of the Society to apply its resources only to the *spiritual* wants of the people.

The Committee will not check the private liberality of individuals, who choose to give their charity to the destitute or persecuted—but they will not be the channel of this relief, however needy the suppliant. Every penny entrusted to them is spent in sending the gospel to the Roman-Catholics, in seeking to win them from the errors of their ways by the faithful exhibition of the doctrines of Christianity, and by an exposure of the delusions of Romanism.

There are many Associations formed in England for helping this work in prayer. They are the Lord's remembrancers; they "lift up their voices for the remnant that is left;" they give the Lord no peace or rest, until He have mercy on Ireland; and they assist in sending the means whereby the call of God is continued, which saith

* The exact words are—"that the Committee desire to take this opportunity of recording upon their minutes, that it is one of the fundamental principles of this society, upon which it has acted from its formation, and will continue to act, never to employ any of the funds entrusted to its administration for the purposes of temporal relief, to any persons who are the objects of their missionary labours." (Minute 202.)—The *Times*, in a leading article, dated February 2, 1852, thus states its conviction with reference to the charge of bribery:—"We believe—and we have spared no pains to investigate the grounds of our belief—that the great movement in the West of Ireland cannot truly be attributed to any such cause."

to the inhabitants of the spiritual Babylon, now residing in Ireland,—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Rev. xviii., 4, 5.) The agents who carry on the operations of the Society in Ireland, are, as far as can be ascertained, men of sound judgment, piety, and zeal. This is the secret of all their success. They are men of God—continually in prayer.

The progress of civilization and industry is very remarkable amongst the converts: spinning, knitting, net-making, deep-water fishing, &c. &c. &c., have followed in the train of the reformation. Every experiment of the legislature has failed,—The Gospel is Ireland's only panacea—it is *God's* remedy—the one *He* prescribes; and wherever it is adopted, there prosperity, contentment, and peace are to be found.

CONVERSIONS IN IRELAND.

The Romanists boast of the wise and the prudent of this world going over to Rome.

But, on the other hand, for every *pervert* in England, there are a hundred converts in Ireland. It is calculated there are between 30 and 40,000 converts in Ireland, within the last few years brought out of Romanism through the instrumentality of various societies, besides thousands who have emigrated to America, to escape the persecution at home. In the Bishop of Tuam's diocese alone, including Achill, Connemara, &c. &c., there are considerably upwards of 10,000; proving that God's word is powerful to the pulling down of Satan's strongholds. There are hundreds and thousands besides, who are now enquiring; no longer led blindfold by the priests, and who, if the Christian public of England support these missions as they have done, will—the Lord blessing the means—have the boldness to declare themselves on the side of truth.

DUTY OF ENGLISHMEN TOWARDS IRELAND.

England, under Henry II., in the twelfth century, conquered Ireland, and made her hitherto independent church, tributary to Rome. She forced Popery on the Irish with the sword and with the spear. Now she is coming forward, most nobly, to help her to shake off the yoke thus imposed. And in this she will reap a present advantage. Her agricultural districts and manufacturing towns, which now teem with Irish colonists and emigrants, carrying with them Popery, in all its degrading and debasing forms, will be

relieved of such a burden as this. An enlightened people will supply their place, and instead of demoralizing the inhabitants of England, by the vices and deceptions of Romanism, and feeding the cravings of a vulture-like priesthood, will disseminate (if they are educated in Ireland in the truths and doctrines of vital Christianity) those soul-enlivening principles, which bring glory to God, and inculcate peace and goodwill amongst men.

Popery is the leading cause of Ireland's degradation and misery; England owes all its greatness under God, to incorrupted Christianity—the revelation she has received. Even on the low principle of self-interest and remuneration, England should come forward liberally, and lend her aid in the present crisis.

But the people of the Lord act on higher and nobler motives than these! They have experienced something of Christ's love and power!—something of the joy and peace there is in believing. They know that Romanists, as such, are “idolaters;”—that “they worship the creature instead of the Creator” (Rom. i., 25), and that, *as such*, they cannot be saved (Rev. xxi., 8); and therefore they seek to “snatch them as brands from the burning.” They pity their poverty, ignorance, and superstition. They feel for their spiritual darkness, and blindness; and, knowing that the Gospel alone can enlighten them, set them at liberty, and make them free—they spend and are spent in this service of faith—this labour of love—this glorious work!—not considering how little they can spare in the service of Him, to whom they are indebted for all—but the love of Christ constraining them, they give of their substance, ‘according to that they have’; not grudgingly, or of necessity, but from a willing mind—acknowledging it is God's grace alone that has made them to differ from others.

If such principles as these actuate the reader of these pages, the writer will have cause to rejoice that a few leisure moments from parochial* engagements have not been altogether thrown away. He prays that many of the Lord's people, mindful of their own privileges, may be stirred up to take an interest in these things, and help on the work of the Lord in Ireland, who has promised, that “as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah lv., 10, 13).

* See Preface.

APPENDIX.

The encouragement lately received by the Committee in the continuous supply of pecuniary aid, has induced them to increase the number of their missionary agents [see page 37]. They are now [May, 1851,] as follows :—

28 Missionary Clergymen ; 13 Lay Agents ; 124 Scripture Readers ; 102 Schoolmasters and Mistresses ; total, 267 Agents, besides those mentioned in connection with Local Committees, and who are labouring in over 400 parishes. Several new missions have been entered upon, with every prospect of success ; and the Achill Mission, so long sustained by the Rev. Edward Nangle and his friends, has been adopted by this Society, from 1st May, 1852. This large extension of operations in Ireland, with a proportionate increase of expenditure in England for the gathering of funds, incurs a heavy and serious responsibility, which the Committee undertake in faith, believing that the Lord, who has opened the door for the advancement of Scriptural truth in Ireland, will not suffer it to be closed until He “gathers out of her a people for His name ;” and, therefore, the Committee depend on the necessary means being supplied, the expenditure being at present about £1600 EACH MONTH ; sometimes more.

Annual subscriptions and donations to the Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman-Catholics will be received at the Office, 14, Exeter Hall, or by the Treasurer, Sir John Dean Paul, Bart., at Messrs. Strahan, Paul and Co.'s, Strand ; at Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Co.'s, Birchin-lane ; Messrs. Herries, Farquhar, and Co.'s, St. James's-street ; and by Messrs. Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly ; Messrs. Seeley, Fleet-street and Hanover-street ; and Messrs. Nisbet and Co., Berners-street. Communications are requested to be addressed to the Secretary, No. 14, Exeter Hall, London.

Donations and subscriptions from parties resident in Ireland, are received and acknowledged by the Rev. Edward Ellis, Corresponding Missionary to the Society, 6, Bachelor's-walk, Dublin.

PRAYER.

O LORD! who art always more ready to hear than we to pray; and hast given us the blessed assurance, that if two shall agree touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them; pleading the name of Jesus, we unite to seek Thy blessing upon the missionary work among the Roman-Catholics in Ireland, that more labourers may be sent into this vineyard; we praise Thee that Thou hast stirred up the hearts of so many to go forth bearing the name of Jesus, to those who have been long in ignorance of its saving power. We bless Thee for the evidence we have that Thou art Thyself "working with them," and notwithstanding the weakness and infirmity of the instruments, Thy grace is glorified in the gathering of many souls to Thyself.

Grant, Gracious Lord, a special measure of Thy Holy Spirit to all the missionaries and labourers of every class now employed in making known Thy truth in Ireland. Amidst all the discouragements and opposition to which they are exposed, give them a mouth and wisdom which none of their adversaries will be able to gainsay or resist—give them the spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind; and grant them, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word. Especially we would supplicate that they may be kept in near communion with Thyself, and be so filled with the Spirit of Jesus as to give no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed.

Let Thy grace preserve them from the snares of the enemy, and Thy providential care protect them from evil of every kind.

We would entreat Thee to bestow a still larger increase of Thy blessing upon their labour of love, that "they may have such success, that the word spoken by them may never be spoken in vain." Let Thy word have free course, and be glorified; and grant that numbers, long enslaved in ignorance and superstition, may receive it in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Give special grace to those who are awakened to the knowledge of Thy truth, that they may boldly confess the name of Jesus, and stand fast in the liberty of the Gospel, in spite of the threats and allurements to which they may be exposed.

Have mercy, O Lord, upon those who have been hitherto instrumental to the ruin of so many souls. Let the riches of Thy grace reach the hearts of these blind leaders of the blind, who love darkness rather than light. May those who have been leading others astray, be themselves brought to the knowledge of Thy truth, and have grace given them to preach to the people the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Pour out a spirit of grace and supplication upon all who unite with us in bearing this blessed work on their hearts before Thee.

Increase in us a spirit of love and zeal for Thy glory. While seeking a blessing for others, may we ourselves receive a larger measure of the gift of Thy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[It is requested that this prayer be used in family worship every Saturday morning, or oftener; and that this publication be circulated widely amongst Christian friends.]

